

Waka Waka

Based on a news release from ADRA-UK

In the developing world many people live with a perpetual energy crisis! They reside in areas where electricity is scarce, intermittent or unavailable; where traditional renewable energy sources like firewood are under threat; and where they have no option but to use paraffin (kerosene) powered illumination.

This dependence on such highly flammable fluids for household lighting in poor urban and rural communities may be traditional, but it is also costly and dangerous.

The danger of fire

Firstly, there is the obvious danger of fire, which often spreads very rapidly in slum areas where dwellings are close together and made of highly combustible materials. According to a recent ADRA press release '6 million are burned every year because of kerosene accidents.'

Paraffin poisoning

Secondly, there is the problem of paraffin poisoning. According to the World Health Organisation:

*'Young children are at greatest risk of paraffin poisoning. Because paraffin has the consistency and appearance of water and in some places is stored in reused beverage containers without child-resistant caps, unsupervised children are at high risk of consuming it.'*¹

Restricted learning

A third problem associated with the use of paraffin is the restriction it places on learning. For example, research by the World Bank in Southern Sudan indicates that a move from paraffin to solar-powered LED lighting had a direct influence on the student pass rate: 'With kerosene lamps this was a mere 57%. Two years after introduction of the solar lamps the pass rate reached 100%.'²

In India studies have shown 'that children who were able to use portable solar lamps studied 2.7 hours per evening instead of 1.5 hours. Here, too, there was an immediate positive effect on school results.'³

The ongoing cost

Paraffin can cost up to 20% of a struggling family's monthly budget, a figure that can be reduced drastically by an innovation called the *Waka Waka* solar lamp (*Wakawaka* means 'shine bright' in Swahili). This device has been engineered specifically for conditions in the developing world, and it uses the very latest technology to provide 8 hours of bright ambient light and up to 80 hours of night-safety illumination – all on a one-day solar charge.

ADRA

ADRA-UK has recognised the value of these lamps and, thanks to a generous donor, it will be distributing them to twenty-four disadvantaged 'off-grid' families with children in Burkina Faso. This is a pilot project, and if it is successful they want to roll it out on a much larger scale.

If you would like to bring light to an 'off-grid' family then let ADRA help you achieve this. For just £20 you can donate a *Waka Waka* solar lamp that will reduce their living costs; decrease their risk of fire and pediatric poisoning; and help their children extend their hours of study.

Check the ADRA-UK website to donate: www.adra.org.uk.

¹<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/9/08-057505/en/index.html>

²<http://www.wakawakalight.com/wakawaka/better-school-r/> ³ibid

